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SUBJECT Ex-Green Beret Brings CIA Into Case

DAN RATHER: A 47-year-old former Marine, accused of trying to assassinate a Libyan dissident in the United States, today added a new element to that bizarre case -- the CIA. Gary Shepard reports from Ft. Collins, Colorado.

GARY SHEPARD: After five months in jail, awaiting trial on charges he attempted to murder Libyan graduate student Faisal Zagoli, former Green Beret Eugene Tufoya broke his self-imposed silence today and denied he was a hit man for the Libyan government.

During an interview with reporters at the Larimar County jail, Tufoya said he was on a mission for the Central Intelligence Agency when he came to Ft. Collins last October.

EUGENE TUFOYA: I came here on an assignment, and it was to deliver a message to Mr. Zagoli. And the message was not in any way connected with an assassination attempt.

REPORTER: Who do you believe was behind the message?

TUFOYA: The CIA.

REPORTER: So you were working for the CIA?

TUFOYA: This is what I understand, yes.

SHEPARD: Tufoya says, when he told Zagoli to stop his activities in support of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Zagoli pulled a gun, fired at him and missed. It was after that Zagoli was wounded twice in the head.

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Tufoya says he applied for a job with the CIA in May of 1976, shortly after he retired from the Green Berets. He was hired about three years ago, he says, by a man who claimed to be a CIA agent.

TUFOYA: This guy knew -- like he had a record of -- my military record. He knew everything about me, and when I met him, he had the credentials.

REPORTER: What credentials?

TUFOYA: CIA.

SHEPARD: Later, Tufoya claims, he was also recruited by former CIA agent Edwin Wilson to go to Libya and help train soldiers in the Libyan army. But, while he was there, Tufoya claims he was also spying for the CIA.

TUFOYA: As a matter of fact, I confirmed the fact of a nuclear facility in Libya, a few other installations, and all this information was passed on, along with photographs.

REPORTER: You were spying on Libya when you were over there.

TUFOYA: That's right.

REPORTER: Well, are you telling us that you were doing two different things in Libya -- that you were working for Wilson, supposedly to train Libyan soldiers in squad tactics, and at the same time you were working for the agency, for the CIA?

TUFOYA: Keeping them informed on what was going on in Libya.

REPORTER: Did you inform on Wilson's activities?

TUFOYA: Yes.

SHEPARD: Eugene Tufoya claims Ed Wilson still owes him \$36,000 for his working Libya, that he feels abandoned by the CIA, and, if he had it to do all over again, he never would have gotten involved.

For its part, the CIA denies Eugene Tufoya ever worked for it.

Gary Shepard, CBS News, Ft. Collins, Colorado.

RATHER: I said that Tufoya was a Marine. I was wrong -- as Gary Shepard noted, Tufoya was an Army Green Beret, not a Marine.